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ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE

MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH,

UPON THE

SANITARY CONDITIONS OF THE DISTRICT
DURING THE YEAR 1940.

HUNTINGDON :

FRIEND & FLINT, PRINTERS, GRAMMAR SCHOOL WALK.

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TO THE
GODMANCHESTER URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL.

MR. MAYOR AND GENTLEMEN,

I have the honour to present the Annual Report on the Sanitary conditions of the District for the year ending 31st December, 1940.

The practice whereby the Report is drawn up on the lines suggested by the Ministry of Health has been adhered to as in the previous year's issue.

The normal peace time work has been, as far as circumstances permitted, carried out as usual but in consequence of pressure of work arising from additional duties placed upon the Authority less time has been available to devote to it, and the routine work has been somewhat curtailed.

The decision of the Council towards the close of 1939 to make available to the public free immunisation against Diphtheria was a commendable action which proved to be anticipation of what was later recognised a nation-wide requirement and undertaking.

Staff.

Medical Officer of Health ;

D. S. BUCHANAN, M.B., B.S., B.Hy., D.P.H.

Sanitary Inspector :

F. J. EAST, M.I.S.E., A.R.San.I.

Statistics and Social Conditions of the Area.

Area	...	...	...	...	4,956 acres.
Estimated Population (Mid. 1940)	...			...	2,460.
			(Mid. 1939)	...	2,122.
Number of Inhabited Houses, end of					
1940	...	...	...	...	651.
Rateable Value	...	...	...	...	£8057.
Value of Penny Rate	...	...	...	...	£31 17s. 4d.

During the course of 1940 no radical change took place in the industry of the district which is chiefly connected with agricultural activities. In addition there is one factory engaged in the manufacture of hosiery products and another in the manufacture of cereal foods.

Vital Statistics.

Live Births			Total.	M.	F.
Legitimate	...	...	27	16	11
Illegitimate	...	...	3	2	1
Birth Rate per 1000 of the estimated resident population 12·1.					
Still Births	...	...	1	1	—
Rate per 1000 total (live and still) births 32·2.					
Deaths	...	...	41	18	23
Death Rate per 1000 of the estimated resident population 16·6.					
Death Rate Adjusted 15·6.					

Deaths from Puerperal causes (Headings 29 and 30 of the Registrar General's Short List):—

	Deaths.	Rate per 1000 Total (Live and Still) Births.
No. 29 Puerperal sepsis
No. 30 Other puerperal causes
	---	---
Total

Death Rate of Infants under one year of age :—

All Infants per 1,000 live births	...	...	64·5
Legitimate Infants per 1,000 legitimate live births	...	...	71·4
Illegitimate Infants per 1,000 illegitimate live births	...	...	nil.
Deaths from Cancer (All ages)	...	...	7
Deaths from Measles (All ages)	...	...	nil.
Deaths from Whooping Cough (All ages)	...	...	nil.
Deaths from Diarrhœa (under 2 years)	...	...	nil.

Rates.

	Per 1,000 Population.			Per 1,000 Live Births
	Live Births.	Still Births.	Death Rate.	Infantile Mortality.
Godmanchester	12·1	0·40	15·6	64
England and Wales	14·6	0·55	14·3	55
London (Adm. County)	13·7	0·44	17·8	50
126 County Boroughs and Great Towns including London	16·0	0·64	15·8	61
148 Smaller Towns	15·7	0·55	12·8	54

The following table shows the classification of deaths from all causes, Registrar-General's figures.

Godmanchester.

Causes of Death.					Males.	Females.	Totals.
1	Typhoid and paratyphoid fevers	...	...	...	—	—	—
2	Cerebro-spinal fever	...	...	...	—	—	—
3	Scarlet Fever	...	...	...	—	—	—
4	Whooping Cough	...	...	...	—	—	—
5	Diphtheria	...	...	...	—	—	—
6	Tuberculosis of respiratory system	...	...	...	1	—	1
7	Other forms of Tuberculosis	...	...	...	—	—	—
8	Syphilitic diseases	...	...	...	—	—	—
9	Influenza	...	...	...	2	2	4
10	Measles	...	...	...	—	—	—
11	Ac. Polio myel. & polio enceph.	...	...	...	—	—	—
12	Ac. inf. encephalitis	...	...	...	—	—	—
13	Cancer of bv. Cav & oes (m) uter	...	...	...	—	1	1
14	„ „ of stomach & duodenum	...	...	...	1	3	4
15	„ „ of breast	...	...	...	—	—	—
16	„ „ of all other sites	...	...	...	1	1	2
17	Diabetes	...	...	...	—	—	—
18	Intra. cran. vasc. lesions	...	...	...	2	5	7
19	Heart disease	...	...	...	4	2	6
20	Other dis. of circul. system	...	...	...	—	2	2
21	Bronchitis	...	...	...	2	2	4
22	Pneumonia	...	...	...	2	1	3
23	Other resp. diseases	...	...	...	—	—	—
24	Ulcer of stomach or duodenum	...	...	...	—	—	—
25	Diarrhoea, (under 2 years)	...	...	...	—	—	—
26	Appendicitis	...	...	...	—	—	—
27	Other digestive diseases	...	...	...	—	—	—
28	Nephritis	...	...	...	1	1	2
29	Puer. & post abort. sepsis	...	...	...	—	—	—
30	Other maternal causes	...	...	...	—	—	—
31	Premature birth	...	...	...	1	—	1
32	Con. mal; birth inj; inft.	...	...	...	—	1	1
33	Suicide	...	...	...	—	—	—
34	Road Traffic accidents	...	...	...	—	—	—
35	Other violent causes	...	...	...	—	—	—
36	All other causes	...	...	...	1	2	3
	Total	...	...	...	18	23	41

General Provision of Health Services for the Area.

(a) LABORATORY FACILITIES.

Bacteriological specimens from Practitioners in the district are examined and reported upon either at the Pathological Laboratory, Cambridge, or the Clinical Research Association, London.

(b) AMBULANCE FACILITIES.

(1) For the removal of infectious cases a motor ambulance is available at the Isolation Hospital, Huntingdon.

(2) For non-infectious and accident cases a motor ambulance is available also in Huntingdon.

(c) NURSING IN THE HOME.

Nursing in the district is carried on by the nurse provided by the Nursing Association. This nurse is also a qualified midwife and attends the majority of maternity cases and also acts as a Health Visitor.

No provision is made for the home visiting of Measles, Whooping Cough and Infantile Diarrhoea.

All cases of Tuberculosis are visited by the Tuberculosis Health Visitor and a report with details of home conditions and circumstances is completed.

(d) CLINICS AND TREATMENT CENTRES.

The Hunts. County Council provide the following health services:—

School Clinic	...	Every Monday 2 p.m.
Infant Welfare	...	First Tuesday and Last Thursday in month 2-30 p.m.
Orthopaedic	...	1st & 3rd Tuesday in month 11-30 a.m.
Eyes	...	By Appointment.
Nerve Clinic	...	1st & 3rd Wednesday in month 2-30 p.m.
Dental	...	By Appointment.

The above Clinics are held at F.A. Post, George Street,

Huntingdon, and are available for, and within a reasonable distance of this Borough.

Cases of Tuberculosis when reported are investigated by the County Medical Officer.

Veneral Disease—Addenbrookes Hospital—Tuesday 3 p.m., Thursday 7 p.m., both sexes.

Under the Ante and Post Natal Scheme, provided by the County Council, expectant mothers are examined twice during the pregnancy (or more often when necessary) and once after confinement.

(e) HOSPITALS—PUBLIC & VOLUNTARY.

- (1) Fever—The treatment of infectious diseases is carried out at the Hospital for infectious diseases at Huntingdon, which is provided by the Joint Hospital Board.
- (2) The County Hospital, Huntingdon and Addenbrooke's Hospital, Cambridge, continue to carry out the general hospital service in the district.
- (3) Provision is made for the reception of all maternity cases occurring among evacuated mothers in the district in the Emergency Maternity Hospital established by the Hunts. County Council at Paxton Park. Under special conditions resident women and also women not evacuated under the Government Evacuation Scheme are admitted to this Hospital for their confinement.

The original provision in the hospital at the Huntingdon Institution, for cases in which home conditions are not suitable, is still available. In addition cases are still admitted into the County Hospital when complications make it necessary.

Sanitary Circumstances of the Area.

Water.

A mains supply of water of excellent quality and quantity is provided in the Borough, the water being purchased in bulk from the Huntingdon Borough Water Undertaking. Despite this many wells are still in use some in which the water is of a doubtful nature.

Drainage and Sewerage.

Sanitary conditions of the district remain very much the same as in previous years and very few conversions from the pail closet to the W.C. are made. The majority of houses still have pail closets (490) although the houses are provided with main water supply (300). In view of tentative proposals received in connection with development to be carried out after the war, the Council have under consideration a new sewage scheme to cope with this new development and to meet the needs of the district generally. The present sewers would be totally inadequate and unsuitable to take sewage from Water Closets.

The existing sewers are mostly of stoneware and take the waste and surface water together with the road washings, and discharge into an open ditch outside the town which in turn flows into the river.

Public Cleansing:—Dry refuse is collected in covered carts and disposed of by Controlled Tipping.

Refuse from Pail Closets is collected at nights by carts and is eventually used as manure.

Cesspools are emptied in the same way.

Housing.

As a result of present day conditions, housing activities of any magnitude have been placed in abeyance. During the year 4 new houses were erected, all by private enterprise.

Compulsory powers were exercised by the Council in respect of 4 cottages, which were made habitable by the Council and a charge registered.

Three condemned cottages were repaired by the owners and temporary licences were issued by the Council to permit their use for the housing of evacuees.

Housing conditions generally are unsatisfactory and slum clearance and re-housing on a large scale will be required when conditions are normal.

Towards the end of the year tentative proposals were received in connection with development to be carried out by private enterprise after the war.

Routine inspections have continued, all complaints investigated and the appropriate action taken.

Inspection and Supervision of Food.

Milk Supply.

There are 14 registered cowkeepers in the district. The duty of sampling milk is carried out by the County Council, but the Borough Council is still responsible for the registration of dairies and cowkeepers and for the enforcement of the sanitary provisions.

Meat.

There are 3 slaughter houses in the district but under existing regulations of meat control, these are not in use.

All carcasses are inspected prior to being sold to the public.

Sanitary Inspector's Report.

To the Medical Officer of Health.

Sir,

I beg to submit my report for the year ended 31st December, 1940.

During the year regular inspections of dwelling houses, cowsheds, dairies, factories and bakehouses have been carried out, and all complaints received have been investigated.

Owing to pressure of work in other directions, as a result of the war, particularly in connection with salvage and evacuation, routine inspections have been somewhat curtailed, and, as a result of shortage of labour and materials, some difficulty has been experienced in getting work carried out, but there has been no serious deterioration in the sanitary condition of the borough.

Owing to the large influx of population as a result of the war a certain amount of overcrowding exists.

Samples of water have been sent regularly to the Emergency Public Health Laboratory at Cambridge and one sample was sent to the Public Analyst. There has been a steady increase in the number of water consumers from the public mains, but there are still about 180 houses drawing water from shallow wells.

The question of the adoption of bye-laws for new streets is under consideration.

Some of the larger houses are now let in lodgings and have given rise to complaints, but these may prove to be temporary war time conditions. If they should prove to be a permanent feature the adoption of bye-laws under the Housing Act, 1936, appears to be advisable.

Total No. of Inspections made 102.

„ „ Notices served 31.

(Informal 18. Statutory 13).

Complaints received	Total No. of	...	...	20
Premises, Houses, &c.	No. inspected	...	...	32
	Nuisances abated	...	...	20
Pool, ditch, gutter, water-course	No. inspected	...	...	2
	Nuisances abated	...	...	—
Animals improperly kept	No. inspected	...	...	1
	Nuisances abated	...	...	1
Offensive accumulations	No. inspected	...	...	1
	Nuisances abated	...	...	1
Infectious Disease	Houses affected with	...	...	7
	Houses inspected...	...	...	7
	No. of inspections	...	...	7
	Houses disinfected	...	...	7
	Schools	...	...	—
	Disinfectant used	Formalin		
	Lots of clothing disinfected	...	...	7
Pail or earth closets	No. converted to W.C.'s	...	...	3
Water supply	Samples taken for analysis	...	...	14
	„ condemned	...	...	8
	Public supply substituted for well or pond	...	...	8
Housing, etc., Act, 1936	No. demolition orders	...	...	3
	No made habitable	...	...	24
Total Legal Proceedings. <i>i.e.</i> , Summonses, etc.	...	...	...	3
	Convictions	...	...	1

Factory and Workshop Act, 1937.

Factories	...	...	Total number on register (including bakehouses)	...	8
			No. in which nuisances abated		2
Bakehouses	...	...	No. on register	...	4
Home Work	...	...	No. of outworkers...	...	1
			No. of houses	...	1

F. J. EAST,

*Sanitary Inspector.***Prevalence of and Control Over Infectious and Other Diseases.****Infectious and Contagious Diseases.**

There was no change during the year in the diseases compulsorily notifiable under the Notification Acts and Regulations.

Of the total number of cases of infectious disease, Measles and Whooping Cough together accounted for approximately 60%, while Chicken Pox cases amounted to over 20% of the total cases. These diseases were prevalent throughout the year.

Scabies, a disease practically unknown in the district in normal times, made its appearance and affected chiefly the School children. It was undoubtedly introduced by the evacuees.

The following tables gives the incidence of notifiable diseases (other than Tuberculosis) in the area during 1940.

Disease.	Total.	Under 1 year	1-2	2-3	3-4	4-5	5-10	10-15	15-20	20-35	35-45	45-65	65 and upwards	Cases adm. to Hosp.	Total Deaths.
Smallpox	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Scarlet Fever	2	...	...	...	...	1	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	2	...
Diphtheria	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	1	...
Enteric Fever (including Paratyphoid)	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Puerperal Pyrexia	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Pneumonia	18	...	2	1	1	...	2	1	...	3	1	6	1	...	3
Measles	46	1	3	2	...	6	29	2	...	3	...	...	...	...	...
Whooping Cough	29	2	2	5	1	3	13	3	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Erysipelas	3	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	2	1	...	...	...
Chickenpox	28	...	...	1	...	2	18	6	...	1	..	...	...	...	...

Diphtheria Immunisation.

Following the preparatory work in connection with a scheme for mass immunisation against Diphtheria towards the close of 1939, an intensive drive was commenced in the early part of 1940. Schools were used as enquiry bureaux and immunisation centres. The Head Teachers in the district willingly co-operated and gave all assistance within their power to make the scheme successful.

Some difficulties were experienced while working in these School immunisation centres—buildings never intended for such work and consequently not equipped with the essential for clinical work of this type. Most of these difficulties, however, had been anticipated and with some improvising were largely overcome.

The prophylactic preparation used was Burroughs Wellcome A.P.T. The method adopted was an initial sensitising dose followed by the main injection after an interval.

The following table summarises the number of children treated up to the close of the year :—

Godmanchester Residents.			Evacuees	
	Complete	1st Injection only	Complete	1st Injection only
Children under 5	14	1	1	...
Children over 5	80	2	42	3

Tuberculosis.

Age Periods.	New Cases				Deaths.			
	Respiratory		Non-Respiratory		Respiratory		Non-Respiratory	
	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.
0 ...								
1 ...								
5 ...								
15 ...								
25 ...		1						
35 ...					1			
45 ...								
55 ...								
65 and upwards								
Total	...	1	...	...	1	...	...	...

No action was found to be necessary under the Public Health (Prevention of Tuberculosis) Regulations 1925, in connection with persons suffering from pulmonary tuberculosis employed in the milk trade, or under section 172 of the Public Health Act, 1936, which deals with the compulsory removal to hospital of persons suffering from tuberculosis.

I am,

Your obedient servant,

D. S. BUCHANAN,

Medical Officer of Health.

